C!N
1007
Jonah Hex

Hex Marks the Spot

He's roamed the Old West for more than a third of a century, earning a reputation as one of the most determined of all bounty hunters. He has a face that even a mother would find difficult to love. We know a lot about Jonah Hex... but one thing we *don't* know is his origin.

Then again, can a scarred soldier turned bounty hunter be said to *have* an origin?

According to *Jimmy Palmiotti & Justin Gray,* he certainly can—and not only are they revealing that origin to the world beginning with ***Jonah Hex #13,*** but they're enlisting one of the world's most renowned comic book talents, *Jordi Bernet,* to help them bring that origin to life on the printed page.

Jimmy Palmiotti admits that discussing the "origin" of a Western bounty hunter might seem a little bit unusual. "Unlike a superhero that wakes up and has powers one day, Hex's origin is really about a lifetime of events that have driven him to become the man that he is portrayed to be in the books now. With these issues of ***Hex,*** we cover the main things that have formed him and we think… the events that the readers would be most interested in reading about."

Buried in Jonah Hex's past are the fragments of an origin that Palmiotti & Gray have pulled together to act as a framework for their tale. "His origin was covered very briefly in the past," Gray said. " What we've done is expanded on the facts and given deeper insight to the creation of his personality and code of ethics."

Was it tough to sell DC on the idea of adding an origin to the saga of Jonah Hex? "For the most part it hasn't been tough selling DC on *anything* we're doing, because Hex exists outside the universal architecture of what's happening today in the DCU," Gray said. "We are incorporating Jonah's continuity as elements of the story because there's nothing to change."

"We wanted to *start* the series with this origin tale," Palmiotti added, "but the editor at the time, *Steve Wacker,* thought it would be a story better told later in the series, and we all agreed to that.

"This also explains why we recently chose to sign an exclusive with DC and not anyone else," Palmiotti continued. "They trust us with the material, give us support, and let us run with the character as we see fit. We told them we wanted to write the origin in three parts and the response we got from DC was 'that's totally cool…can't wait to see what you guys can do.' This kind of attitude is rare these days and we are just about smart enough to recognize it and take advantage of it. We took a long look at what came before and crafted this story using those elements and some new insight."

For Jonah Hex, an origin isn't the story of a lightning strike or an alien contact or an exploding planet; instead, it's a personal story of development and change. "We're looking at a non-linear telling of his time in the Civil War, his childhood, and his time with the Apache," Gray said. "This harkens back to the original idea of telling 'Legends of Jonah Hex' as opposed to a continuity-based format so prevalent in comics. We're showing more of his relationship with his father and the weight of the Civil War on his personality."

Over the past three and a half decades, various glimpses into Hex's earlier years have been presented, from his horrible family life to his Civil War experiences to his near-death and subsequent scarring. Will all of these earlier revelations play a role in the story, or will Palmiotti and Gray discard what doesn't fit into their origin timeline? "We're very loyal to what has come before and are not trying to re-invent the character," Palmiotti said. "That said, we *do* get to build on past work and give the readers a more complete story. That's the beauty of writing a book like ***Jonah Hex…*** you can make the word as colorful as you want and there is so much noted history and research done, the amount of stories to be told are endless. It's like painting on a never-ending canvas."

"Right—we're sticking to the established continuity and building on it for a more intimate portrait of the man. There are details and history we left out because they were covered extensively in his first series," Gray added. "

"Totally. This is our chance at the same time to make our mark on the character. It's all about building a legend," Palmiotti continued.

"We're still in the process of making ***Jonah Hex*** accessible to a new audience…we hope. So covering his origins with a nonlinear story that breaks from the 'one-and-done' formula we've been using felt like the right move. We spent the first year of ***Hex*** building on his legend with minimal insight to how he came to be this badass gunslinger. This is a great way to open a new year for people that might not have picked up a copy in the past," Gray said.

This look into Jonah Hex's past begins with an experience in his present. "The framing story for this is one of revenge," Gray said. "We're using a nonlinear framing sequence because with a book like ***Hex*** it is more fun to build a tapestry of stories that allow the readers to develop their own ideas on when certain events transpire. The idea from day one was to present a campfire atmosphere where individual tales are told out of order, giving ***Jonah Hex*** a mythological weight."

While some real-world events, such as the Civil War, play a role in the story, Palmiotti and Gray are reluctant to follow the ***Deadwood*** route of weaving their story within a tapestry of historical events. "We like that the Old West is presented in this book as a mythological place in time," Gray said. "The problem I have with ***Deadwood*** that we want to avoid here is that sometimes reality lacks drama. In the season finale of ***Deadwood's*** third season, I felt let down by the fact that we'd been living with this tension of an inescapable showdown between Hearst and the camp—and in the end, what happened? He left. He walked away, making Elsworth's death completely meaningless in my opinion. I love the show but that's a good reason to shy away from historical accuracy."

"Justin is dead on with that," Palmiotti added. "That last episode of ***Deadwood*** was the most disappointing thing I have ever watched. The Old West can have specific details worked into it, but I agree that ***Hex*** works best sticking to a more general period of time...before the modern world changed too much."

If real-world characters are out of the picture for ***Jonah Hex,*** then what about other DC Western heroes? Any chance that we'll see more guest appearances further down the line? "El Diablo will be back, along with Bat Lash, in another stand-alone issue illustrated by *David Michael Beck,*" Palmiotti said. "Aside from secret guest stars, we're also introducing Tallulah Black, a new character in the world of Jonah Hex; she's a woman who is very different from the kinds of women we saw in Western films."

How did *Jordi Bernet,* a legendary European talent whose work is all too rarely seen in American comics, become involved with this story? "Everything was handled by *Mark Chiarello, Steve Wacker,* and *Michael Siglain* at DC," Gray said.

"Getting this opportunity to work with one of my personal heroes is a once in a lifetime thing," Palmiotti said. "If you told me ten years ago I would be working on a book with *Jordi Bernet*—the man who drew my favorite comic of al time, ***Torpedo***—I would have told you to get your head checked. The man is all about storytelling and creating a scene using the barest of elements. You can see the influence of Kubert and Toth in every panel, but he turns it all around and does his own thing at the same time. I think the coolest thing about working with Jordi and DC on this project is that it will be published in Spain and Italy and his fans there will get to see the book as well!"

Did Bernet's style of visual storytelling require Palmiotti and Gray to adjust their script to play to his strengths? "There was a natural symmetry that didn't require anything more than letting Jordi tell the story in his own visual style," Gray replied. "The man is a living legend, and we stepped back and let him work his magic."

Witness the magic for yourself on November 1st, when ***Jonah Hex #13,*** the kickoff issue of the three-part origin tale, is scheduled for release.

by Cliff Biggers

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

Comic Shop Newsarama

Produced by Comic Shop News in cooperation with Matt Brady and newsarama.com

Marvel Amps Up with DB Pro

A couple of weeks ago, *CSN* told you about DBPro's move to Marvel, where the innovative independent publisher will issue its products through Marvel. Now we've had a chance to speak to Marvel publisher *Dan Buckley* and Marvel Sales & Marketing Director *David Gabriel* about the venture.

What was it that initially put DBPro on Marvel's "radar"? "A couple of people here at Marvel noticed the properties and talent that the Dabels were enlisting," *Dan Buckley* said, "and this activity inspired us to start thinking about how we could work together."

"Once we met with the Dabels and saw first-hand the enthusiasm and dedication they had to the comics medium, we knew we'd be a perfect match," Gabriel added.

What led Marvel to pursue this unprecedented arrangement with DBPro? "We felt that their product was a good strategic fit for growing our business and the graphic fiction category as a whole," Buckley said.

Gabriel sees the arrangement as a true win-win. "The beauty of this partnership is that neither companies editorial will be cannibalizing sales of the other. We're bringing totally different genres and authors into the industry with a much stronger presence than the Dabels were able to do on their own."

Is it correct that this isn't a purchase as in Marvel's Malibu deal in the 1990's, but something totally different? "You are absolutely correct in that this is *not* a purchase," Buckley said. "This is a publishing partnership, and this is the first time that we have entered into this type of partnership."

What does Marvel gain from the deal? What does DBPro gain? "Marvel broadens its offering to its fans and retail partners," Buckley explained. "DBPro will be freed up to focus on making product and bringing there creative vision to life. We both see a tremendous opportunity to grow both of our businesses."

Will DBPro determine which licensed properties will be pursued, or will Marvel have any involvement in that? "DBPro will be free to pursue the properties that they feel are the best fit for them and them and the market place," Buckley said. "Marvel's involvement will be providing them with the support and analysis necessary to determine what properties are the best fit at that particular time."

"We're treating any new properties the same way we would treat any new pitches from our own editors and creators," Gabriel added. "We'll examine all possibilities and work with the Dabels to make the best choices."

Will previously announced licensed books like ***Stephen King's Dark Tower*** be a part of DBPro now, or will those books remain a Marvel project? ***"The Dark Tower*** is a Marvel project," Buckley said.

Will Marvel editorial/production have any involvement in the preparation of the books, or will DBPro deliver finished projects to Marvel for publication? "Marvel is looking to the Dabels to deliver finished product. We will obviously provide whatever editorial and production assistance that is necessary," Buckley replied.

Gabriel said that "we'll be keeping them on track and on target with a definite mission in mind in the first year, which is to bring some bestselling authors to our industry."

"In closing, we would like to make it very clear that we are very excited about this partnership," Buckley said. "The offerings and passion that the Dabels bring to the table provide Marvel and the industry with a wonderful opportunity for growth."

Check out this issue's ***Coming Comics—Marvel in December*** for more info about the Marvel/DBPro partnership and the products in the pipeline for release in October, November, and December.

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Ins & Outs

Out: *J. Michael Straczynski,* who is out as writer of ***Fantastic Four*** in the near future—possibly ending his run with #541. The reason. *Thor!* "Unlike coming onto ***Amazing Spider-Man*** or ***Fantastic Four,*** which were titles already in motion, ***Thor*** is a relaunch, and there's a lot more effort that has to go into that if one is to do it correctly," JMS said. "Because you're not just relaunching a character, you're relaunching a world, and all of the other characters in that world, that mythology.

"So I'm sitting here with flow charts, books on Norse mythology, character sketches (text, not art), outlines in progress, and so on. And there's a point where you say, 'Okay, I can do all of these at the same time, but is that the right decision to make creatively for the books? Or is it better to let one go and use that time to make ***Thor*** even better?' Ultimately, that was the deciding factor."

In: *Bill Rosemann,* who has left DC to to Marvel, where he'll become an editor. No word yet on which books he'll be editing—but you'll hear about it in the *very* near future!

Out: ***Lone Ranger #1,*** which totally sold out of its first printing from Dynamite. The publisher is rushing a second edition into print—and it'll be the *first* second printing in Dynamite history!

In: *Filip Sablik,* who has joined Top Cow as Vice President of Marketing & Sales. Before he joined Top Cow, he worked with Diamond Distribution; he also freelances as a comic artist.

Out: ***Marvel Zombies,*** the hardcover collecting the surprise hit miniseries, has entirely sold out from Marvel. According to Marvel's *Jim Nausedas,* a reprinting of the hardcover is in the works and should reach comic shops in late October.

In: ***Gon,*** *Masashi Tanaka's* acclaimed wordless saga of a little dinosaur who does good, is coming back into print as a part of DC's CMX manga imprint. DC originally released these tales through their innovative imprint Paradox Press; the stories will reformatted in a more traditional manga format for release through CMX in 2007.

Out: The *Joe Kelly-Ian Churchill* story originally solicited for ***Supergirl #12*** i out; instead, the issue will feature a special standalone tale by *Jimmy Palmiotti, Justin Gray, & Amanda Conner* that introduces the new Terra.

"Justin and I are really excited about showing what we can do with Supergirl, and equally excited about introducing the new Terra into the DCU," Palmiotti said. "With Amanda on board for the art, we couldn't ask for a more fun book to premiere her in."

"Supergirl rocks! Amanda Rocks! Terra...throws rocks! It is a perfect combination," Gray added.

Coming Comics—DC in December

52 continues to fill in the gaps in DC's "missing year. ***Weeks 31-34*** present, among other things, a special Christmas issue featuring Batwoman and a surprising New Year's issue with the biggest cliffhanger yet!

Action Comics #846 continues the emotional story "Last Son," written by *Geoff Johns & Richard Donner* with stellar art by *Adam Kubert.* This issue presents new secret identities, new villains, and a new mystery hidden within the Fortress of Solitude! Superman's life reaches a turning point as he confronts an evil power twenty times greater than his own in a battle that threatens not only his planet, but the boy from Krypton.

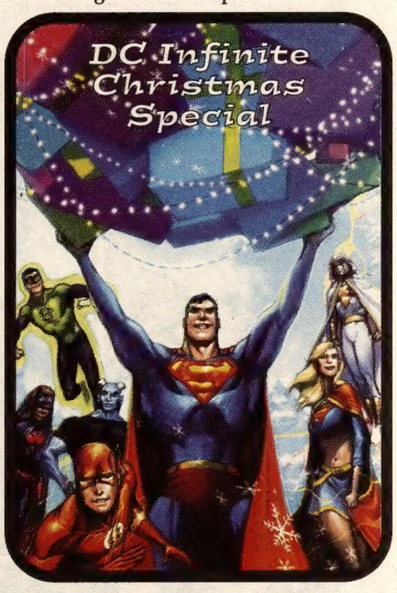
The Man of Steel encounters his topsy-turvy doppelganger Bizarro in ***All Star Superman #7*** by *Grant Morrison & Frank Quitely*! Round and square Earths collide in all-out, All Star action as two mismatched Supermen go toe-to-toe.

John Ostrander & Tom Mandrake begin a four-issue stint with ***Batman #660,*** the introductory installment of a classic murder mystery. Three horrific murders rock Gotham with only one gruesome connection: parts of the victim's faces have been carved away. Meanwhile, a brutal Russian gangster called Perun threatens Amina Franklin, a doctor working at Leslie Thompkins clinic, which brings in not only the Batman but his bizarre new foe: Grotesk!

Andy Diggle, Whilce Portacio, & Richard Friend kick off ***Batman Confidential*** with a six-part story that reveals where Batman first got "all those wonderful toys." Find out exactly when Batman's war on evil in Gotham City ramped up — and how he rose to meet the threat of Lex Luthor's plans to move in on both Bruce Wayne's and Batman's turf!

The new Birds of Prey pay a heavy price in ***Birds of Prey #101*** as one of their own becomes the target of a government sting designed to put Oracle out of business for good.

Let's get crazy! The Creeper crosses paths with the Joker in ***Creeper #5*** by *Steve Niles, Justiniano, & Walden Wong.* So how does the Clown Prince of Crime figure into the bizarre origin of the Creeper?



Get into the holiday spirit with the cleverly-named ***DC Infinite Christmas Special,*** an eighty-pager that features new tales by *Greg Rucka, Judd Winick, Bill Willingham, Kelley Puckett, Keith Champagne, Ian Boothby, Joe*

Bennett, John Byrne, Jerry Ordway, Ale Garza, Giuseppe Camuncoli, & David Lopez featuring Superman, Supergirl, Batwoman, Shazam, Green Lantern, Flash and Shadowpact as they spread the joy of the new season in their own special ways.

Series writer *Paul Dini* returns with ***Detective #826,*** joining artists *Don Kramer & Wayne Faucher* to present a tale that places Robin directly in the clutches of Batman's archenemy, the Joker. Alone and incapacitated, Robin must summon every bit of his courage and ingenuity to free himself before the madman ends the Boy Wonder's life.

In *Judd Winick, Scott McDaniel, & Andy Owens'* ***Green Arrow #69,*** Batman shows up in Star City…unfortunately, the Red Hood isn't far behind! And Speedy is the Hood's target — is she another sidekick to be destroyed despite Batman's best efforts?

Justin Gray & Jimmy Palmiotti continue the three-part look at the origin of Jonah Hex in ***Jonah Hex #14***—and they're joined by European comics legend *Jordi Bernet.*

Get in on the ground floor as the world's first and greatest super-team returns to usher in the DCU's next age of heroes and villains! *Geoff Johns, Dale Eaglesham, & Art Thibert* join with cover artist *Alex Ross* for the debut of the greatest incarnation of the super-team that inspired all the others in ***Justice Society of America #1.*** Determined to rebuild the Justice Society, founding members Green Lantern, Flash and Wildcat initiate an unprecedented recruitment program, tracking the bloodlines of heroes across the world and bringing in the new Starman, Damage, Liberty Belle and more! But just as the Society welcomes the rookies into their ranks, an evil force sets out to destroy them.

Manhunter returns after a brief hiatus with the 26th issue, in which *Marc Andreyko, Javier Pina, & Robin Riggs* are given a new opportunity to turn readers on to one of the best superhero series you're not reading. Manhunter Kate Spencer takes on her biggest case yet with Wonder Woman as the client, but the stakes are higher than anyone knows!

A new, vicious villain enters the picture in *Marv Wolfman, Dan Jurgens, & Norm Rapmund's* ***Nightwing #127*** Raptor has been murdered, but Nightwing has been buried in his grave. Is this the ***Infinite Crisis*** claiming one of its lost victims, or can Dick Grayson find his way to freedom?

Klarion the Witch Boy guest-stars in ***Robin #157*** by *Adam Beechen & Freddie Williams II.* The Boy Wonder battles to save the life of a stray cat...and the fate of the world just might hang in the balance.

Darwyn Cooke & J. Bone revive *Will Eisner's* classic hero for a new generation in ***The Spirit #1,*** the kickoff of a new series that maintains the classic "spirit" of the character while bringing a new sensibility to the exploits of Denny Colt.

Ever since the death of Superboy during the ***Infinite Crisis,*** fans have wondered what became of Krypto, and what those events meant for him. Now writers will find out in ***Superman #659*** by *Kurt Busiek & Rick Leonardi,* a tale that lays the groundwork for Krypto's surprising future.

DC collected editions include:

- ***Batman: Secrets,*** collecting the limited series by *Sam Kieth;*
- ***Batman: Year One Deluxe TP,*** a softcover edition of the fascinating repackaging of the classic *Frank Miller-Dave Mazzuchelli* tale;
- ***Batman: Year One Hundred,*** collecting the miniseries by *Paul Pope* and adding his "Berlin Batman" tale from ***Batman Chronicles #11;***
- ***Crisis Aftermath: The Battle for Bludhaven,*** collecting the six-part limited series;
- ***Fallen Angel Volume 2: Down to Earth,*** collecting *Peter David's* ***Down to Earth #s 7-12;***
- ***Ion: The Torchbearer,*** collecting ***Ion #s 1-6;***
- ***JSA Classified: Honor Among Thieves,*** collecting ***JSA Classified #s 5-9;***
- ***JSA: Ghost Stories,*** collecting the *Paul Levitz* tale from ***JSA #s 82-87;***
- ***Justice Volume 2,*** a hardcover compilation of ***Justice #s 5-8*** by *Alex Ross, Jim Krueger, & Doug Braithwaite;*
- ***The Justice League of America Hereby Elects...,*** a trade paperback compilation of classic new-member tales from #s 4, 75, 105-106, 146, 161, & 173-174;
- ***Kamandi Archives Volume 2,*** collecting *Jack Kirby's* ***Kamandi #s 11-20;***
- ***Manhunter Volume 2: Trial by Fire,*** collecting ***Manhunter #s 6-14;***
- ***Outsiders: The Good Fight,*** collecting ***Outsiders #s 34-41;***
- ***Showcase Presents The Brave & The Bold—The Batman Team-Ups Volume One,*** collecting ***B&B #s 59, 64, 67, 69-71, & 74-87;***
- ***Showcase Presents Justice League of America Volume 2,*** collecting ***Justice League of America #s 17-36;***
- ***Superman: Back in Action,*** collecting ***Action #s 841-843;***
- ***Superman: Camelot Falls,*** a hardcover compilation of ***Superman #654-658;*** and
- ***Superman: Emperor Joker,*** collecting the offbeat tale that pits the Man of Steel against the Joker, Emperor of the Universe.

Coming Comics— WildStorm/ DC in December

Kenny Kincaid, marine salvage specialist, may not have much interest in superheroes... but that's going to have to change when he discovers that the Authority have somehow been relocated from their reality to his own superhero-less world. Find out how they got there, and what they plan to do—in ***The Authority #2*** by *Grant Morrison & Gene Ha.*

WildStorm's new line of New Line-inspired horror comics expands with the addition of ***Friday the 13th,*** a new series by *Jimmy Palmiotti, Justin Gray, & Adam Archer.* Crystal Lake... a beautiful young woman... murdered friends... a hockey-masked killer... it's all in here!

After being ambushed and forcibly taken off the Carrier with a bomb implanted into his chest, The Midnighter is made an offer he can't refuse: accept the terms of a deadly mission or die. Problem is, Midnighter doesn't take kindly to an ultimatum. Find out what choice he makes in ***Midnighter #2*** by *Garth Ennis, Chris Sprouse, & Karl Story.*

Back in action—albeit with a much smaller budget—Jackson King and his StormWatch Post-Human Division are ready for action. Their first assignment? Take down the Walking Ghost, one of the most infamous metahuman crimelords on Earth. Talk about your trial by fire! See the fireworks in ***StormWatch: PHD #2*** by *Christos N. Gage & Doug Mahnke.*

Some people count on a pension for their retirement. Others have faith that Social Security will see them through. But what do superheroes do when it's time to hang up the cape and call it quits? They go to Tranquility, that's what! ***Tranquility,*** a new series by *Gail Simone & Neil Googe,* focuses on the town where super-powered retirees settle down. From the Golden Age to the Modern Age, heroes and villains alike reside in Tranquility, and it creates a unique blend of personalities and conflicts that causes the local law enforcement nothing but headaches!

WildStorm celebrates the stellar career of the imprint's founder in ***WildStorm Fine Arts Spotlight on Jim Lee,*** a forty-page special featuring cover art, pin-ups, and rarely seen Jim Lee gems.

WildStorm collected editions include:

- ***Majestic Volume 3: The Final Cut,*** collecting ***Majestic #s 13-17*** and the story from the ***WildStorm Winter Special;*** and
- ***Red Sonja/Claw the Unconquered: Devil's Hands,*** collecting the WildStorm/Dynamite co-produced miniseries.

Coming Comics— Vertigo/DC in December

Is Santa Claus a fable? That's the question that *Bill Willingham, Mark Buckingham, & Steve Leialoha* tackle in ***Fables #56...*** but they're going to make you read the self-contained story to discover the answer.

A Vertigo classic returns in a decidedly different form in ***Sandman Mystery Theatre: Sleep of Reason*** by *John Ney Rieber & Eric Nguyen.* A new age of terror demands a new Sandman to quell its nightmares. This disturbing new miniseries follows the final days of Wesley Dodds and his lifelong love Dian Belmont as they encounter a harrowing fate while traveling in Afghanistan circa 1997. Ten years later, with American troops on the ground in that country, wartime photojournalist Kieran Marshall is forced to take on the mantle of Wesley's former alter-ego, the terrifying crimefighter known as The Sandman.

Vertigo collected editions include:

- ***Doom Patrol Volume 5: Magic Bus,*** collecting *Grant Morrison's* ***doom Patrol #s 51-57;***
- ***Lucifer Volume 11: Evensong,*** collecting ***Lucifer #s 70-75*** and the prestige-format oneshot ***Lucifer: Nirvana*** in the final trade paperback of the series; and
- ***Testament Volume 2: West of Eden,*** collecting ***Testament #s 6-10.***

Coming in May 2007 from DC Direct

Terry Dodson's art is the inspiration for the ***Wonder Woman Vs. Superman Statue,*** sculpted by *Ray Villafane.* Packaged in a four-color box, this limited edition, hand-painted cold-cast porcelain statue measures approximately 16" high x 7" wide x 7" deep.

Okay, it may not be a *weekly* offering, but DC Direct will offer its first series of ***52 Action Figures*** next spring. The initial offerings include ***Animal Man, SuperNova, Batwoman, Isis,*** and ***Booster Gold.***

And what better companion for the ***52 Action Figures*** than a new series of figures based on the miniseries that paves the way for ***52? Infinite Crisis Series 2*** includes ***Batman, Superman, Firestorm, Wonder Woman, Donna Troy,*** and ***Donna Troy/Wonder Girl.***

The ***Batman/Scarecrow: Fear Gift set*** features a pair of DC Direct updated and revised action figures, along with a 24-page comic reprinting a classic Batman/Scarecrow confrontation.

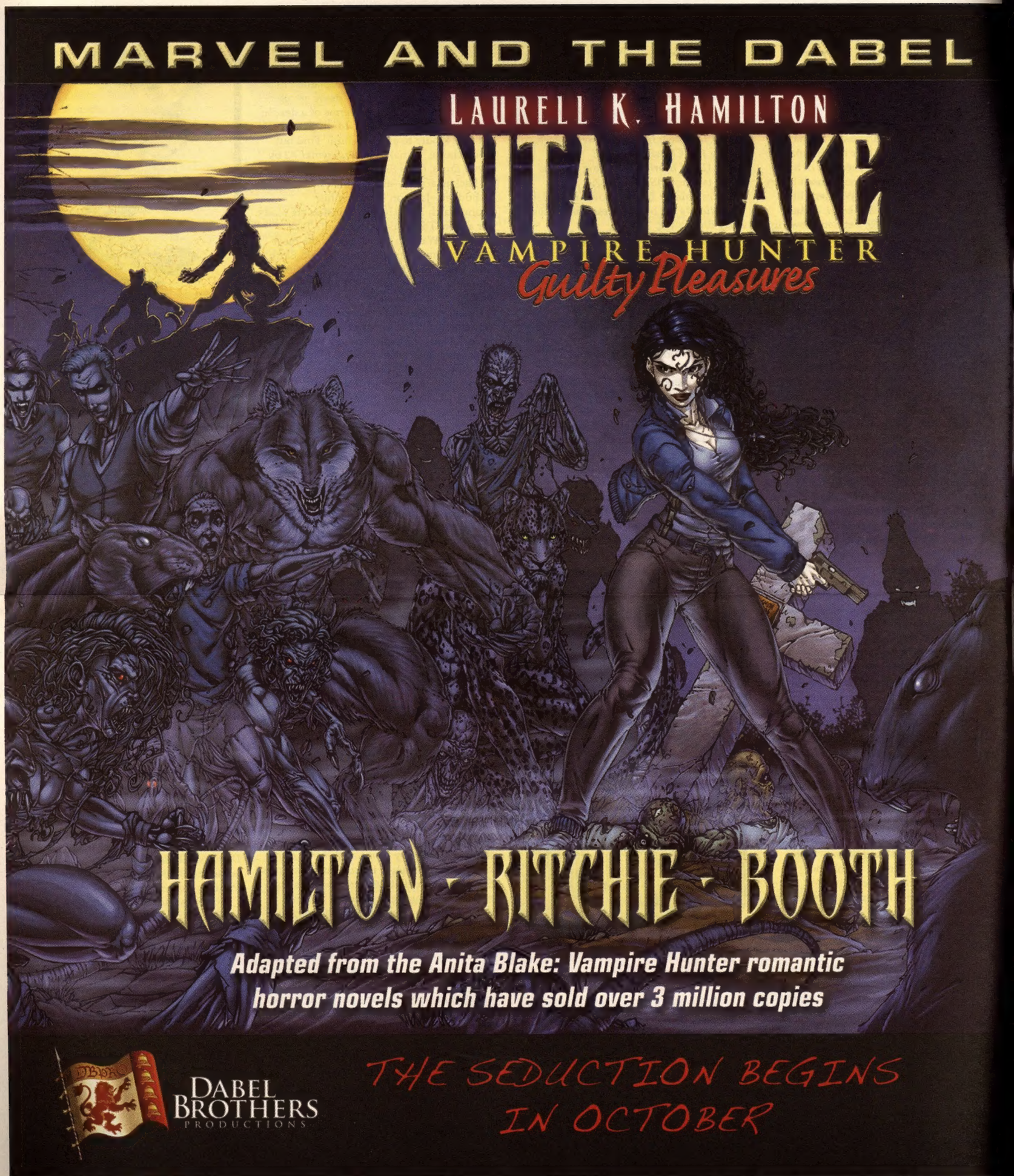
J'Onn J'Onzz is the latest hero to graduate from mere 1:12 scale figures to an articulated 1:6 scale. ***The Martian Manhunter 13" Deluxe Collector Figure*** comes clothed in an authentically detailed fabric costume and includes a display stand.

The latest *Adam Hughes*-designed ***Women of the DC Universe Bust*** spotlights the fan-favorite ***Batgirl.*** This limited edition, hand-painted, cold-cast porcelain bust, sculpted by *John G. Mathews,* measures approximately 5.5" tall.

Gil Kane's cover art for ***Green Lantern #166*** is the basis of *Jonathan Matthews'* ***JLA Cover to Cover Statue: Green Lantern,*** the latest in a series of statues based on iconic DC covers.

DC Direct's poster offerings for May include ***Justice Society of America #1,*** illustrated by *Alex Ross;* ***Justice League of America #1,*** illustrated by *Ed Benes;* ***Ex Machina Special #1,*** illustrated by *Tony Harris;* and ***Wildcats #1,*** illustrated by *Jim Lee.*

Continued on page 6


MARVEL AND THE DABEL
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ANITA BLAKE
VAMPIRE HUNTER
Guilty Pleasures
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Adapted from the Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter romantic horror novels which have sold over 3 million copies
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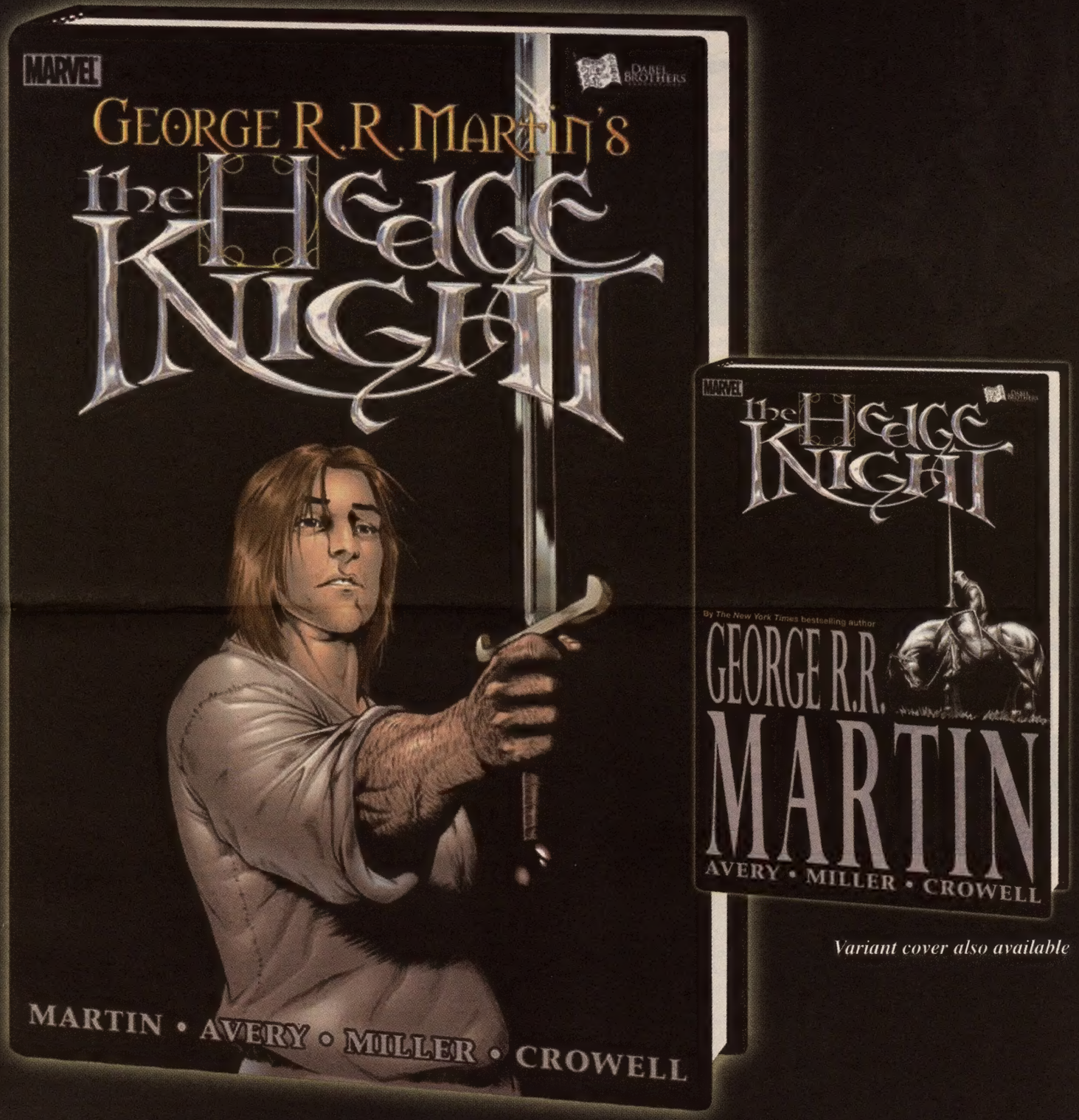


Variant cover also available

A Prestigious Hardcover by the *New York Times* bestselling author, George R.R. Martin

Join the adventure this October

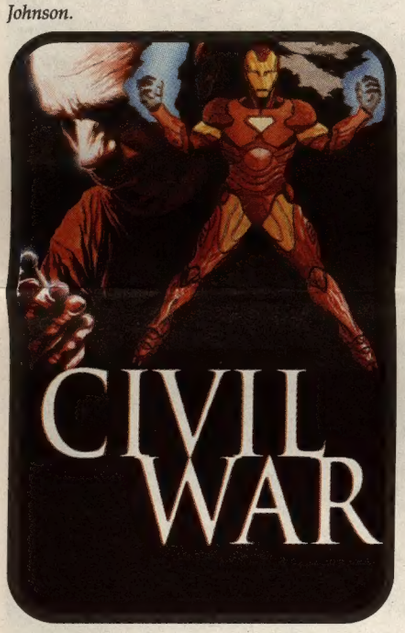
MARVEL

Coming Comics—Marvel in December

In ***Black Panther #23,*** T'Challa and Storm decide to get involved in the Civil War that's rocking the US, launching a three-part ***Civil War*** tie-in.

J. Michael Straczynski & Tommy Lee Edwards continue their alternate-reality look at the Marvelverse in ***Bullet Points #2.*** With military policeman Ben Parker killed during the assassination of Dr. Abraham Erskine—the developer of the Super Soldier serum—Peter Parker has become a disenchanted teen, angry at the world. After he wanders in front of the path of a gamma bomb test, how dangerous does the combination of a lonely, angry boy and the lethal power of a rampaging Hulk-ish monster become? Steve Rogers, the WWII hero known as Iron Man, is about to find out.

Wilson Fisk, the incarcerated ex-Kingpin of Crime, has a deal to propose to Iron Man: he'll use his underworld connections to help track down Captain America and his anti-Registration underground in exchange for consideration on his sentence. But can the Kingpin be trusted? Find out in ***Civil War: War Crimes,*** a oneshot by *Frank Tieri & Staz Johnson.*



In *Ed Brubaker & Michael Lark's* ***Daredevil #92,*** Matt Murdock finally comes face-to-face with the person who's been manipulating his life since he was thrown in jail—and readers will be stunned by the revelation!

The Dabel Brothers' cooperative publishing venture with Marvel launches in October with the release of several delayed DBPro titles now slated to appear under both imprints. Titles that readers will see over the next three months include ***Anita Blake, Vampire Hunter #s 1-3*** by *Laurell K. Hamilton, Stacie M. Ritchie, & Brett Booth;* ***Red Prophet: The Tales of Alvin Maker #3 & 4*** by *Orson Scott Card, Roland Bernard Brown, & Renato Arlem;* ***Magician: Apprentice #s 3 & 4*** by *Raymond E. Feist, Michael Avon Oeming, Bryan J.L. Glass, & Brett Booth;* and ***Ptolus: City by the Spire #1 (2nd printing) & 2*** by *Monte Cook & Caanan White.* Additionally, Marvel and DBPro are repackaging the early issues of some already-launched series in ***Red Prophet: The Tales of Alvin Makes Collected Edition,*** compiling the first two issues of the *Orson Scott Card* adaptation;

Magician: Apprentice Collected Edition, compiling the first two issues of the *Raymond E. Feist* adaptation; and ***George R. R. Martin's Hedge Knight Premiere HC,*** collecting the acclaimed limited series by *George R.R. Martin, Ben Avery, & Mike Miller.*

2007 sees the debut of Marvel's adaptation of *Stephen King's* ***Dark Tower*** series—but you'll get a sneak peek in December, courtesy of the ***Dark Tower: The Gunslinger Born Sketchbook,*** highlighting the art of *Jae Lee.*

Thunderbird is the focus of ***Exiles #89,*** a standalone issue by *Tony Bedard & James Calafiore.* Comatose in a stasis wall, the fallen Exile is dreaming of a world where he had stayed with the team! What would have changed?! And would the team have been better off?

The original Exiles confront the current team line-up in ***Exiles Annual #1,*** an extra-length issue by *Tony Bedard & Jim Calafiore.*

Deborah Whitman suspected that her tell-all about her relationship with Peter Parker would stir up some trouble—but she didn't expect a battle between Spider-Man and the Vulture at the bookstore where she's doing her first signing! See the struggle in the stacks in ***Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man #15,*** by *Peter David & Scot Eaton.*

Superstar illustrator *Richard Corben* supplies the guest art for the two-part origin of Ghost Rider that begins in ***Ghost Rider #6.***

In the midst of Civil War, Captain America and Iron Man meet secretly, one last time, to see if there's any hope of working things out before further tragedy occurs. Witness that meeting in ***Iron Man: Casualties of War,*** a ***Civil War*** tie-in by *Christos Gage & Jeremy Haun.*

Can it be true? Has *John Romita Jr.* really been a comic artist for thirty years? You'd better believe it—and Marvel is commemorating the event with the ***John Romita Jr. 30th Anniversary Special,*** which offers a retrospective of JRJr's career as well as a new story written by JRJr's ***Eternals*** partner *Neil Gaiman.*

The Fin Fang Four. Annihilus. the Thing. They're all a part of the festivities in ***The Marvel Holiday Special,*** a 48-page holiday-themed oneshot.

Captain America attempts to enlist Moon Knight to join his side in the expanding Civil War in ***Moon Knight #8*** by *Charlie Huston & David Finch.*

Rogue and the Beast guest-star in *Brian Reed's* ***Ms. Marvel #10*** as Carol Danvers has to confront the terrible things that she has done. *Mike Wieringo* is the guest artist for this pivotal issue.

You met the Illuminati for the first team in the lead-up to ***Civil War***—but that was far from their first behind-the-scenes involvement in Marvel Universe events. See the earlier experiences of this cabal of powerful heroes in *Brian Bendis, Brian Reed, & Jim Cheung's* ***New Avengers: Illuminati,*** a five-issue limited series that reveals how they helped to mold the Marvel Universe at crucial times—beginning with the Kree-Skrull War.

Warren Ellis & Salvador Larroca relaunch Marvel's short-lived and ill-fated New Universe in ***newuniversal,*** an ongoing series set in a universe without superheroes... until the celestial anomaly known as the White Event changed a small group of humans, transforming them into something more...

X-23's past returns to haunt the New X-Men in "Mercury Falling," a four-part arc by *Christopher Yost, Craig Kyle, & Paco Medina* that begins in ***New X-Men #33.***

Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa & Sean Chen continue to spotlight the women in Peter Parker's life with ***Sensational Spider-Man #33's*** standalone tale focusing on Aunt May. After her nephew suffers a terrible beating at the hands of one of his most brutal foes, it's up to her to take care of him... But with the whole world seemingly against them, how long can she bear to see someone she loves in so much pain and anguish?

Brian Bendis & Mark Bagley make Marvel history with ***Ultimate Spider-Man #103,*** setting the record for the longest continual run on a superhero series by any Marvel creative team. Oh, and there's a pretty doggone good Clone Saga installment in here, too!...

At long last, *Mark Millar & Bryan Hitch* bring their second ***Ultimates*** series to a dramatic conclusion. ***Ultimates 2 #13*** presents the surprising end of "Grand Theft America," and some surprising changes lay the groundwork for 2007's ***Ultimates 3.***

Picking up directly from the events of ***Ultimate Extinction, Ultimate Vision*** is coming your way, courtesy of *Mike Carey & Brandon Peterson.* The Earth was saved from the Ultimate threat—Gah Lak Tus. But scientist George Tarleton has captured a piece of that awesome entity and plans to reactivate it for his own evil purposes. The only hope for mankind against this mad scheme—the strange alien being called The Vision!

Marvel's ***What If?*** event continues with ***What If? Deadly Genesis,*** in which *David Hine & David Yardin* reveal what might have happened had Professor X's second team survived their experiences on Krakoa; and ***What If? X-Men: Age of Apocalypse,*** in which *Rick Remender & Dave Wilkins* speculate what might have happened had Legion killed Magneto and Xavier.

Bucky stars in his own oneshot in *Ed Brubaker & Lee Weeks'* ***Winter Soldier: Winter Kills.*** Captain America's one-time partner faces his first Christmas in the 21st Century—and he also faces the truth of the terrible things he was forced to do as the Winter Soldier.

It's Christmas Eve, and a heavily armed suicide cult–clad in elf outfits–has taken hostage a mid-Manhattan department store and is threatening to blow the place sky high. Among the shoppers: Logan, who's just itching to sink his (Santa) claws into someone after enduring the Yuletide rush. The holiday spirit is breaking out in ***Wolverine #49*** by *Rob Williams & Laurence Campbell.*

Wonder Man confronts the dangerous assassin Lady Killer in the five-part ***Wonder Man*** limited series by *Peter David & Andrew Currie.* Wonder Man doesn't want to just stop her, though—he's made a bet with a movie producer to rehabilitate her into a hero!

It's a busy month for X-23—first she's spotlighted in ***New X-Men,*** and now she's starring in her second solo series. *Christopher Yost & Mike Choi* follow X-23 as she struggles to create a real life for herself. But when your entire life has been about death and destruction, can you ever *really* escape the darkness?

Marvel's collected editions include:

- ***Avengers Disassembled,*** a hardcover edition of ***Avengers #s 500-503 & Avengers Finale;***
- ***Captain America & the Falcon: Nomad,*** a trade paperback reprinting ***Captain America & the Falcon #s 177-186;***
- ***Essential Defenders Volume 2,*** a hefty black-and-white compilation of ***Defenders #s 15-39 & Giant-Size Defenders #s 1-5;***
- ***Essential Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe—Update '89,*** featuring almost 500 pages of late 80's Marvel reference material;
- ***Heroes Reborn: Avengers,*** collecting ***Avengers Volume 2 #s 1-12;***
- ***Marvel Comics Presents Wolverine Volume 4,*** collecting the Wolverine tales from ***MCP #s 62-71;***
- ***Marvel Masterworks: The Avengers Volume 6,*** collecting ***Avengers #s 51-58, Annual #2,*** and ***X-Men #45;***
- ***Marvel Visionaries: John Buscema,*** spotlighting the acclaimed artist's work produced during his half-century of working with Marvel;
- ***Moon Knight Volume 1: The Bottom,*** a hardcover compilation of ***Moon Knight #s 1-6;***
- ***New X-Men: Childhood's End Volume 3,*** collecting ***New X-Men #s 28-31;***
- ***Powers: The Definitive Collection Volume 2,*** a hardcover compiling #s 12-24 of the original series and adding sketchwork, scripts, interviews, galleries, original designs, and more;

•***Punisher Max: From First To Last,*** collecting a trio of ***Punisher*** Max oneshots;
•***Runaways Volume 2,*** an oversized hardcover collecting the first twelve issues of the second series, along with the ***Runaways/X-Men*** book from Free Comic Book Day 2006;
•***Spider-Man Loves Mary Jane Volume 2: The New Girl,*** a digest-sized compilation of ***Spider-Man Loves Mary Jane #s 6-10;***
•***Star Brand Classic Volume 1,*** reprinting the first seven issues of the premiere New Universe series by *Jim Shooter & John Romita Jr.;*
•***Supreme Power Volume 2,*** collecting ***Supreme Power #s 13-18*** and ***Supreme Power: Hyperion #s 1-5;***
•***Thor: Blood Oath,*** a trade paperback edition of the six-issue limited series;
•***What If? Classic Volume 3,*** a trade paperback compilation of ***What If? #s 14-15 & 17-20;***
•***Wolverine by Claremont & Miller,*** a hardcover collecting the 1980's ***Wolverine*** miniseries along with ***Uncanny X-Men #s 172-173;***
•***Wolverine: Origins & Endings,*** a trade paperback edition of ***Wolverine #s 36-40;*** and
•***X-Men: Deadly Genesis,*** a trade paperback edition of the six-issue limited series.

Coming Comics—Image in December

Dave Johnson, Jeff Johnson, Josh Middleton, Dan Panosian, & LeSean Thomas present a selection of work produced at pubs and taverns across the country in ***Drink & Draw Volume One,*** a hardcover compilation of booze-enhanced weirdness.

Ten years after the introduction of ***The Darkness,*** Top Cow celebrates with an all-new series featuring Jackie Estacado and his friends. The first five issues of this series are stories springing from the five different levels in the Xbox 360 and Playstation3 video game coming out in early 2007. They're not adaptations from the game script but original self-contained stories designed to be just as entertaining for non-gamers as they are for veteran players. The line kicks off with a prequel, ***The Darkness: Level Zero,*** by *Paul Jenkins, Geraldo Borges, & Mattias Snygg;* from there, it continues into ***The Darkness: Level One*** by *Paul Jenkins, David Wohl, & Stjpan Sejic.* Top Cow also commemorates the anniversary with a pair of lithographs: ***The Darkness 10th Anniversary Lithograph by Marc Silvestri*** and ***The Darkness 10th Anniversary Lithograph by Dale Keown.***

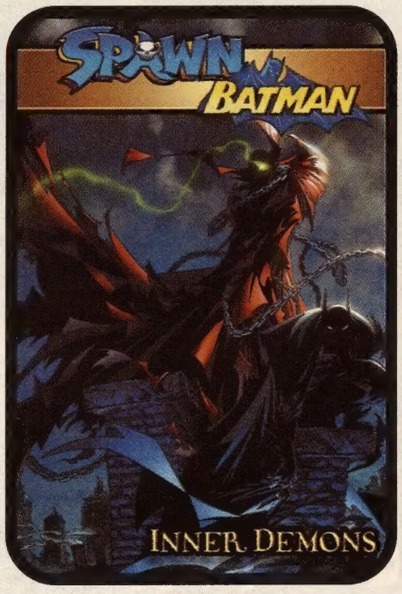
The final anniversary offering is ***The Art of the Darkness,*** a 96-page graphic novel featuring classic art supplemented by commentary from the artists. Covers, splash pages, collectible cards, sketches--the best of the best ***The Darkness*** art and some iconic images from video game and other peripheral Darkness merchandise are presented here in their unadulterated form.

Paul Jenkins & Dale Keown are working on a four-part ***Darkness/Pitt*** limited series for 2007—but you don't have to wait that long to see what it's going to look like! ***The Darkness/Pitt First Look*** is a special 24-page comic that leads into the upcoming limited series—and it makes the first appearance of Keown's Pitt in almost a decade!

David Schwartz & Sean Wang explore the final days of a dying hero in ***Meltdown,*** a two-issue limited series starring The Flare, a dying super-hero with a chip on his shoulder who attempts to set his life in order.

Mike Carey presents two tales of offbeat horror in ***Mike Carey's One-Sided Bargains,*** a sixty-four page oneshot.

Todd McFarlane & Greg Capullo once again bring Batman and Spawn together in ***Spawn/Batman,*** a oneshot produced in cooperation with DC. It's been over a decade since their first meeting. But this time is perhaps the most dangerous meeting of all... a battle for our heroes' very souls and sanity as Batman must confront the Clown while Spawn faces off against the Joker.



Danielle Baptiste has taken over the Witchblade from Sara Pezzini—but Dani is about to learn that possessing the Witchblade and mastering the Witchblade are two totally different things! See her in action in ***Witchblade #104*** by *Ron Marz & Adriana Melo.*

David Chauvel's adaptation of *L. Frank Baum's* ***Wonderful Wizard of Oz,*** winner of the prestigious 2005 Grand Prix de La Ville De Lyon Award of Illustration when it was originally published in France, is presented for the first time in English in this Image edition.

C.B. Cebulski focuses on romances of his past in the autobiographical ***Wonderlost;*** he's joined by such artists as *Paul Azaceta, Ethan Young, & Jonathan Luna* for these high school love stories.

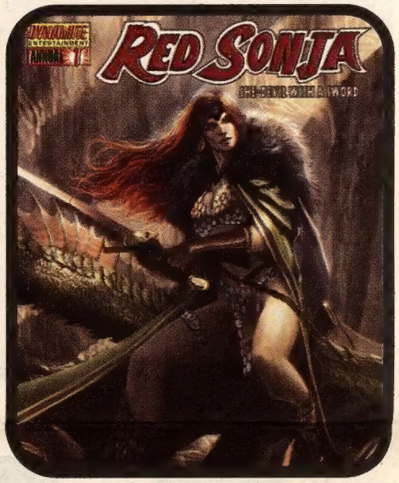
Image compilations include:
•***Angry Christ Comics,*** a collection of *Joseph Michael Linsner's* early work;
•***The Darkness Volume 5,*** collecting ***Darkness v2 #s 7-16*** plus the oneshot ***The Darkness: Wanted Dead;***
•***Deadworld: Requiem for the World,*** collecting ***Deadworld #s 1-6;***
•***The Complete Invincible Library Volume One,*** a massive 768-page collection of ***Invincible #s 1-24, 0*** and the Free Comic Book Day 2004 story, along with more than 150 pages of extras produced in a 2500-copy limited edition;
•***Jack Staff Volume 3: Echoes of Tomorrow,*** collecting ***Jack Staff #s 6-12;***
•***Liberty Meadows Volume 4,*** a softcover edition of the *Frank Cho* collection;
•***Occult Crimes Taskforce Volume 1,*** collecting ***Occult Crimes Taskforce #s 1-4;***
•***The Portent Volume 1,*** collecting the first four issues of the fantasy series;
•***PvP Volume 4: PvP Goes Bananas,*** collecting ***PvP #s 19-24;*** and
•***Savage Dragon Archives Volume 1,*** a massive black-and-white compilation of *Erik Larsen's* ***Savage Dragon*** miniseries and ***Savage Dragon #s 1-21.***

Coming Comics—Dynamite in December

The first story arc by *Rick Remender & Carlos Rafael* concludes in ***Classic Battlestar Galactica #4*** as Starbuck, Boomer, and a band of rag-tag colonial survivors work desperately to defeat the Cylon menace and make their way back to the Galactica!

John Reid & Tonto return home in *Brett Matthews, John Cassaday, Sergio Cariello, & Dean White's* ***Lone Ranger #4***—but will what they find there be sufficient to convince John to stop running and face the legacy thrust upon him?

The conflict between Red Sonja and Kulan Gath comes to an end in ***Red Sonja #18*** by *Michael Avon Oeming & Mel Rubi.* This end of this conflict will launch Red Sonja and her companions on a quest to save their world... but it'll be a long, hard return trip home!



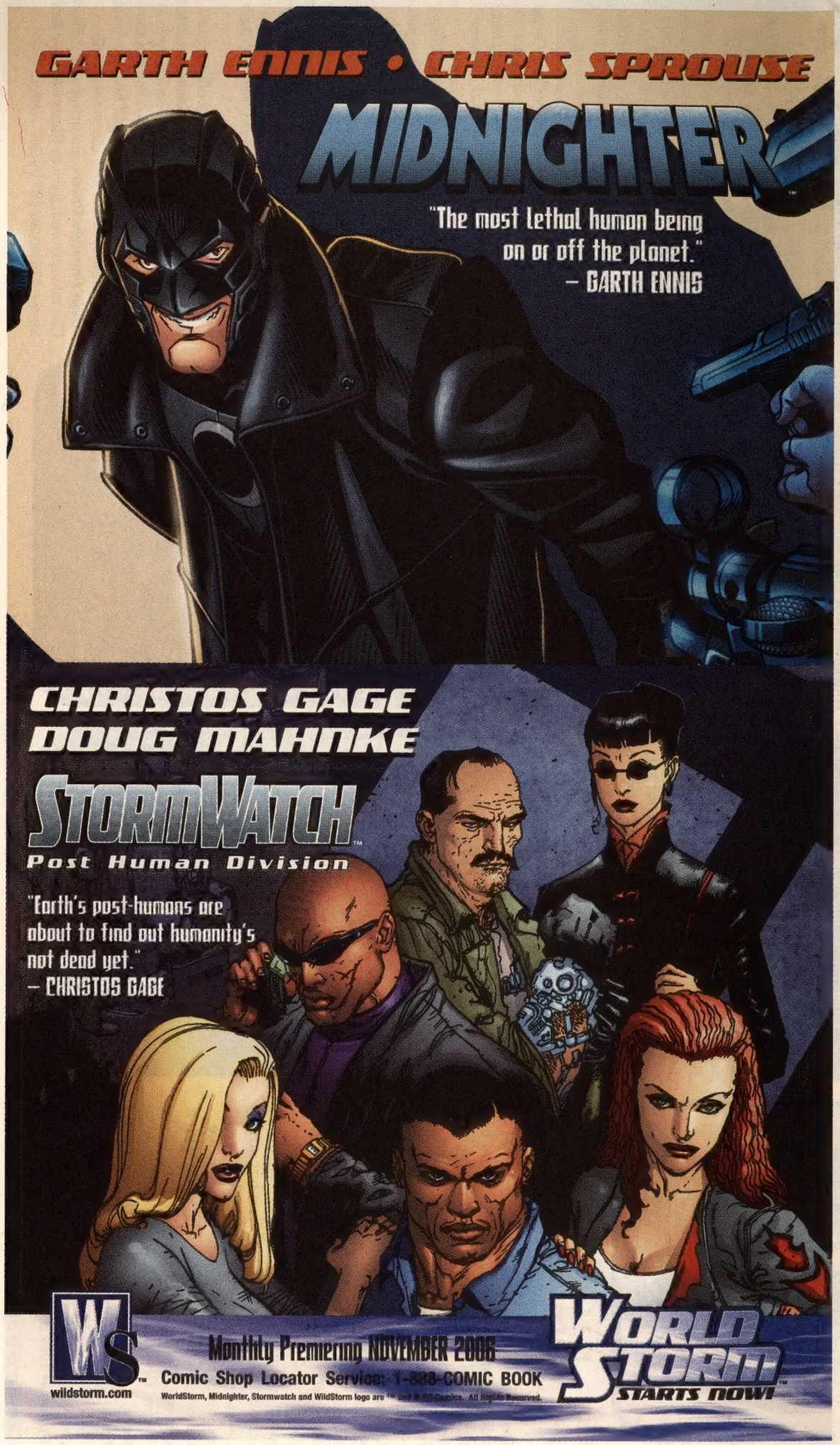
Michael Avon Oeming joins with artist *Stephen Sadowski* for a special flashback tale in ***Red Sonja: She-Devil With a Sword Annual #1.*** In "Masks" the legend of Red Sonja is told from a different perspective as a mask maker enters a small village to present the wife of a brothel owner with a special mask to unleash the she-devil within. This issue also includes an eight page guide to the world of Red Sonja, including a complete overview of her previous and legendary Marvel comic book series!

John Layman, Noah Salonga, & Chris Garcia present the return of Dark Xena in ***Xena #5.*** This new storyline, which takes place after the series finale of ***Xena: Warrior Princess*** and before the events of the the first Dynamite story arc finds Gabriele making a request of the Gods—and learning that you must be very, *very* careful, what you wish for, and how you wish for it!

Dynamite unveils its Dynamite Select in December with the release of a pair of statues. First is their ***Red Sonja Statue*** sculpted by *Shawn Nagle,* inspired by *Adam Hughes'* RRP cover for ***Red Sonja #2***—and it's presented in white, gray, and red, just like the cover art that inspired it.

The second Dynamite Select offering is their ***Army of Darkness: Ash Statue*** sculpted by *Anthony Colella* and based on art by *J. Scott Campbell.* This 13" statue captures the vitality of *Sam Raimi's* intrepid hero.

Dynamite Select also offers their ***Red Sonja Premiere Poster,*** featuring art by *Frank Cho* taken from his cover illustration for ***Red Sonja #13*** on an 18" by 24" poster.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